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January 27, 2009

Honorable Diane Sands  
Montana House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0500  
[hdsands@aol.com](mailto:hdsands@aol.com)

Re: House Bill No.: HB 301  
Short Title: Include paralegal services in attorney fee awards  
Primary Sponsor: Deborah Kottel

Dear Ms. Sands:

As a Missoula Representative on the Judicial Committee, I am writing to you in support of House Bill 301 to include paralegal services in attorney fee awards.

I, as a practicing attorney, support House Bill 301 for the following reasons:

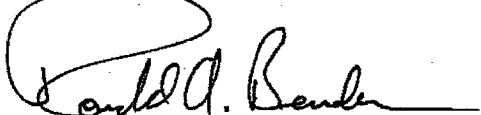
1. The prevailing practice in the community is for attorneys to bill clients for a paralegal's time to perform substantive work that would otherwise have been performed by the attorney at a higher rate. Including paralegal services in attorney fee awards will allow the client to recover all legal fees paid to an attorney for such services.
2. Including paralegal services also keeps costs of attorneys fees down for the client as the attorneys are more likely to use paralegals. They are used for initial drafting, legal research, document and pleading review, investigation and assembly of facts, and documents in transactional work and litigation. The use of paralegals allows legal services to be provided more efficiently and at less expense to persons needing legal representation.

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3. It will provide equal access to justice.

Our firm urges you to support HB-301. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronald A. Bender". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning.

Ronald A. Bender, Principal  
Worden Thane P.C.

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